CONTRA COSTA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
COORDINATING COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER
MAY 1, 1980

Note from Carol Leland

I enjoy reading about your activities, and many of our members have told me that they think it is a great idea to learn about all the societies. If your society is not listed here it is because I have had no communications. I enclose forms to be completed by those who have not done so yet. Thank you.

The next meeting of the Contra Costa County Historical Society will be at noon, Saturday, May 17, at the Commandant's Residence in Benicia. Our speaker will be Mrs. Raoul Emparan, the widow of General Vallejo's grandson. We will also have a slide show of the history of Benicia, which will make your visit to Benicia more interesting. Call Jim Jory, 228-4534, or send a check for $7.50 per person to the society at P.O. Box 190, Martinez, 94553.

ANTIOCH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Antioch had a pot luck supper on April 24. Charles Bohakel showed slides of the 1907 earthquake and fire. THE BIG NEWS is the planned official opening of Antioch Historical Center on July 4, the 129th anniversary of that historical picnic on the river at which the original settlers chose the name of Antioch. The Center is the result of the cooperative efforts of business, industry and local citizens. The society is very active and has 200 members and 30 life members. Congratulations!

CONCORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Concord is celebrating its Diamond Jubilee, having been incorporated in 1905. Concord Historical Society held its annual Wisteria Tea on April 20 at the Fidelity Bank which is built around the Salvio Pacheco Adobe. The bulletin features pictures of the history of Concord, including the wisteria arbor in Todos Santos Plaza. Many events are planned for the Jubilee year.

CONTRA COSTA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

This active society has 150 members and has provided the "Heritage Collection" of genealogical material to the county library. They provide many necessary records by microfilming church and civil records and indexing county cemetary records. Their bulletins are filled with helpful information for novice and expert. If interested, contact them at P.O, Box 910, Concord.

EL CERRITO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

This society has an Historic Resources Inventory, and they publish items of interest in their bulletin. Did you know they set a license fee of $300 per quarter to regulate fortune telling in early 1900's, and as a result their unwelcome gypsies moved out of town rather than pay the fee. The latest bulletin includes a short history of the coal mines, and a reminder of the special exhibit at Lowie Museum at U.C. Berkeley until June 30, 1980. Many of Lou Stein's pictures are used, and he was honored in the opening ceremonies. Thanks for reminding us to see this exhibit!

JOHN MUIR MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

The 100th anniversary of the wedding of John and Louie Muir was marked by a week long series of events in April. The association gives nature walks at the Martinez Shoreline and Briones Park, and welcomes inquiries for information from any group. They had a dinner April 21 where Supt. Osmund told about her trip to Dunbar, Scotland, John Muir's birthplace.

LAFAYETTE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

This society has marked eight historic sites with bronze plaques, and all buildings are still standing: Plaza Park, 1854, donated by Elam Brown, founder of Lafayette; Way Side Inn, 1894; Geils Building, 1880; Pioneer Store, 1860; Schoolhouse, 1893; Town Hall, 1914; Trees by church, 1930 c; and the cemetary, 1854. Walking tours are conducted about the historic sites for school children and adults. In 1978 the Society was instrumental in purchasing "Old Betsy", the 1920 fire engine used in Lafayette, which now appears in parades. For ten years the Society has shown historic exhibits in the Lafayette Federal Savings and Loan Building. Oral history has been an on-going project and at present they have 30 tapes made by old timers which are being transcribed. In 1976 a pictorial history of "La Fayette" was published and is being reprinted. Copies were given to schools, libraries and the membership, as well as being sold. The annual pot luck supper is very popular, with 200 members and old timers sharing experiences. All of the society's historic materials, including about 1000 cataloged photographs, are open to the public and are housed in the Lafayette library.

MARTINEZ HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Martinez Society held their annual meeting and election of officers on March 11. Justice Wakefield Taylor spoke on "40 Years of Contra Costa Law". The society was recently given an original 1878 Smith and Ellior book on Contra Costa County by the grandson of an early resident, Judge Joseph P. Jones. They now have a complete library of county histories.

ORINDA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Orinda is very fortunate to have their history recorded in a beautiful book which was thoroughly researched and very well written by Muir Sorrick, former C.C.County Historical Society director. Now only 60 copies are left of the second printing. This society has just completed their annual school program where they take over the curriculum for fourth graders for one week and teach Orinda history in all subject areas. Very successful!

PINOLE and SAN PABLO HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

These two societies joined for "Historical Appreciation Day' on April 20. Featured were tours of old homes in Pinole, the historic old village of Hercules, and old homes and the Alvarado Adobe in San Pablo. Their bulletins feature many historical articles which are very interesting.

RICHMOND MUSEUM ASSOCIATION

This active group is very busy working on the opening of their museum. May 4 is the big day for the dedication of the newly restored and enlarged Richmond Museum. An invitation is extended to each of you to enjoy a fun-filled and entertaining program. It all begins at 1:30 at 4th and Nevin on the steps of the museum. Also of interest is the open house on May 3 at East Brother Lighthouse. The museum will be represented on a planned Richmond Area Cultural Commission to publicize Richmond's cultural facilities.

WALNUT CREEK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

This society reports that Shadelands Museum is not a "little green oasis in a big business park and all the squirrels and quail are seeking refuge there." How wonderful the society saved the house and grounds! They are working on a mock kitchen and the pump house. The society has a large photograph collection and an active oral history program. Watch the papers for their annual successful "Shadelands Follies" in June - it is their chief source of revenue.

LAFAYETTE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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